

Erich L. Lehmann's Biographical Work

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Erich L. Lehmann received his Ph.D. degree from the University of California at Berkeley in 1946. Although he was not the first of Jerzy Neyman's students, he was the first of Neyman's students to be hired by the mathematics department at Berkeley in 1947. His retirement in 1988 marked forty one years of service, all of which – except for visits to Columbia, Princeton, and Stanford – were spent in Berkeley. His professional activities did not diminish after his retirement nor did his social involvement in the department and in the broader statistical community. Having arrived in Berkeley on January 2nd, 1941, Erich spent close to 68 years in Berkeley. The family's departure from Germany in 1933 was accompanied by very difficult circumstances. The experience of becoming a refugee had a strong impact on Erich's future life. In Lehmann (2008), he writes:

I had lost my country, my language, and my friends.

In addition, he had to cope with the death of his sibling. In one of my visits to Erich and Julie, I asked him about a bust of a young man that sat on his working desk. He explained that the bust was of his brother who had died young. It was clear that, even after more than sixty years, the experience was still painful. It is then easy to understand Erich's desire to belong to a community. In Lehmann (2008), he writes:

What I most longed for is indicated by the title of an early draft of this book, "In Search of Community," a community to which I could belong.

He found two communities, his family and the professional community, both of which he embraced with gusto. The former community has been documented in his *Family Memoirs* which he left as a legacy to his family. The latter community has been fascinatingly described in his reminiscences published in Lehmann (2008).

The experiences that led to this desire of belonging, coupled with his arrival in Berkeley to observe first hand, and be such an important part of, the birth and

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development of the Statistics Department, together with his substantial involvement in the social life of his professional community, provided Erich with a wealth of information from which to draw from. Throughout his life, Erich felt grateful to the many individuals that impacted his career along the way. In his early years, there were Edmund Landau, Rolf Noskwith, Richard Courant, Griffith C. Evans, and Jerzy Neyman. During his Ph.D. dissertation stage, Pao-Lu Hsu and George Polya played very important roles. The life-long friendships developed during the years as a graduate student and as a young faculty member in the department, included Joseph L. Hodges, Evelyn Fix, Charles M. Stein, Henry Scheffé, and many others. In addition, there were his 43+ Ph.D. students.

A large portion of Erich's social life revolved around his professional life. In DeGroot (1986), Erich states that

My social life, and this is partly the result of being at Berkeley, is practically confined to statisticians.

He clearly enjoyed the social interactions with his colleagues and students. Given his interests in becoming a writer, it is only natural that he would be involved in writing about many of the members of this professional community. The papers reproduced in this section represent a small collection of Erich's writings about those who impacted his professional development. Knowing how strongly Wald's work intertwined with his own, and knowing the appreciation that Erich had for Wald having interacted with him both professionally and socially, it is perhaps puzzling that Erich co-authored a single-page summary on Wald's work after Wald's death. And, although Erich did not have much interaction with Harold Hotelling, Erich co-authored a twelve page biographical memoir. A possible explanation for the former is that Erich was a very polite individual. As Wald spent all his professional life at Columbia, and since Wolfowitz (1952), a close collaborator of Wald's, had already written a full biography, Erich most likely felt that it was the prerogative of the Statistics Department at Columbia to write about Wald. In the case of Hotelling, Erich writes in Lehmann (2008) that, despite the fact that he had very little interaction with Hotelling, he found himself in the position of Hotelling's biographer thirty years after his death. This was a consequence of the National Academy's custom to honor their deceased members with a memoir. Being asked by the National Academy to find someone to write the Hotelling's memoirs, and not being able to find anyone, Erich decided to write it in collaboration with Kenneth Arrow. As it regards to Wald, Erich took advantage of the opportunity to write extensively about Wald and the impact of his work, forty three and fifty eight years later – respectively, in Lehmann (1993) and Lehmann (2008).

Besides the articles reproduced here, there is, of course, Lehmann (2008). In it, Erich described, masterfully, the work of, and the collaborations and social interactions with, more than seventy members of his professional community. In addition, the set of references below provides several other biographical writings. Together, they provide fascinating accounts of, and many insights about, Erich's colleagues and the development of Statistics.

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